

For Immediate Release

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*Washington, D.C.*--Today, Congressman Albio Sires strongly condemned Fidel Castro's recent statements regarding Israel.

In a state-run publication, Castro stated, "The hatred felt by the state of Israel against the Palestinians is such that they would not hesitate to send the one-and-a-half million men, women and children of that country to the crematoria where millions of Jews of all ages were exterminated by the Nazis. It would seem that the Fuehrer's swastika is today Israel's banner."

The Cuban regime's mission to the United Nations Human Rights Council in Geneva distributed these comments widely to foreign officials and journalists.

In response to these events, Congressman Sires released the following statement:

"The Cuban regime's mission to the United Nations is widely known for their propaganda and hate speech. Their position on the U.N. Human Rights Council would be laughable if it weren't so damaging to the fight for universal human rights. Castro's shocking remarks display a disregard for the democratic ideals that Israel represents and the persecution that the Jewish people endured under the Nazis. These offensive comments articulate the anti-Semitic position of the Cuban regime. These statements against Israel should further illustrate that engagement with such a belligerent regime is not only a mistake, but dangerous to the United States, dangerous to Israel and threatening to the prospect of lasting peace in the region.

"The Cuban regime currently holds over 200 political prisoners in horrid jails throughout the island. Fidel Castro sat idly by while political prisoner Orlando Zapata Tamayo died after a lengthy hunger strike in protest of the regimes repression. Most recently, Cuba refused the United Nations special investigators on torture to enter Cuba and expressed its disgust with the State Department's human trafficking report detailing violations in Cuba. It is not surprising that Castro, a repressive dictator and sponsor of terrorism, would gruesomely attack Israel while choosing to ignore the human rights violations perpetuated by Hamas."

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